

EVENTS

CALENDAR

APRIL

18-20 30th Turf and Landscape Institute, Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, CA. Contact: Ed McNeill, Southern California Turfgrass Council, 2492 E. Mountain St., Pasadena, CA 91104, (818) 798-1715.

30-1 Oregon Golf Course Superintendents Association 27th Annual Meeting, Agate Beach Golf Course, Newport, OR. Contact: Dick Malpass, OGCSA, 10804 NW 11th Ave., Vancouver, WA 98685, (206) 573-6969.

MAY

17 North Carolina State University Turf and Landscape Field Day, NCSU Turf Field Center, Raleigh, NC. Contact: Dr. Art Bruneau, Dept. of Crop Science, NCSU, Raleigh, NC 27695, (919) 737-2326.

JUNE

15 Sports Turf Association Annual Field Day, River Oaks Recreation Centre, Oakville, Ontario, Canada. Contact: Sports Turf Association, 185 Edinburgh Road South, Guelph, Ontario, Canada N1G 2H8, (519) 824-4120, extension 3460.

21 Midwest Sports Turf Institute, Harper College, Palatine, IL. Contact: Sports Turf Managers Association, 400 N. Mountain Ave., Suite 301, Upland, CA 91786. (714) 981-9199.

AUGUST

7-8 Georgia Golf Course Superintendents Association Summer Meeting, Stone Mountain Memorial Golf Course and Conference Center, Stone Mountain, GA. Contact: George Kozelnicky, GGCS, P.O. Box 6377, Athens, GA 30604-6377, (404) 543-7720.

THE FRONT OFFICE

OPINION PAGE

IRRIGATION HAS NO BOUNDARIES



The last four years have changed my attitude about a lot of things in the Green Industry. Living and working in the Southwest has been a real educational experience. After covering the industry for more than a decade, my education was incomplete until I moved West and was able to see and appreciate the importance of irrigation.

The first ten years of my career were spent in the Midwest and Northeast. Irrigation was a luxury except for golf courses. Parks, schools and colleges depended almost entirely on natural rainfall and with few exceptions rarely invested in irrigation systems. There was always the excuse that facilities had made it through droughts before without suffering permanent loss of turf. Living with temporary damage was tolerable compared to the cost and effort required to install irrigation.

When I moved to the Southwest four years ago, it was like a whole new world. Water out here is a year-round concern. With only seven to 17 inches of natural rainfall annually, water is as important to institutions as oil and natural gas are in the Northeast during the winter. No facility can function normally without it.

As I started to learn more about irrigation, I realized that it has no boundaries. It is more than a source of life for turf and landscapes... it is the foundation of all municipal and private high-use recreational facilities. All of us in the Southwest, Southeast and south central United States have discovered for ourselves the absolute necessity of irrigation. Now, everyone else in the country is beginning to learn the same.

Repeated droughts have given many turf managers a new perspective on the importance of irrigation. More of you are experiencing the hopelessness of depending upon natural rainfall for the health and durability of valuable high-use turfgrass sites. You are facing the harsh reality that without a reliable method of applying water to valuable turfgrass areas, months and years of hard work can go down the drain in a matter of weeks.

It doesn't matter where you work anymore. The demand for and use of golf and sports turf no longer allow for weeks or months of drought-inflicted dormancy. We aren't talking about keeping things green. Turfgrasses must remain active to recuperate from traffic and wear throughout the playing season. Use continues with or without water, and with or without dense, durable turf.

This spring and summer, golf course superintendents throughout the country will be cutting back on water. They will concentrate their limited supply on greens, tees, and target areas of fairways. Roughs and large sections of fairways will be brown and hard. But at least superintendents have the ability to control where their limited water supply will go.

Schools, parks and colleges without irrigation won't be able to make such choices. All they can do is watch their fields and surrounding turf areas go dormant. Months of hard work will go to waste... and thousands of dollars in labor and materials will be needed this fall to get back to a starting point. Furthermore, there is no assurance that the exact same thing will not occur next year, and the year after that.

How long will coaches, players and spectators accept poor turf conditions caused by lack of irrigation? How many years can your facility afford to undertake large renovation programs? Can you afford to risk your maintenance budget on increasingly unreliable weather?

If that's not enough to convince management to install irrigation, here is one more fact of life during droughts. Water districts base rationing on current use. Unless you install an irrigation system and claim a certain amount of water for its operation, you will be left out completely when rationing is enforced.

Today water is a major concern no matter where you live and work.

Brent F. Shank

THE EXTRA POINT

STMA NEWS

ANNUAL MEETING SITE IN HOUSTON SELECTED

The Wyndham Greenspoint Hotel in Houston, TX, has been chosen as the site for the Second Annual STMA convention and trade show. The three-day event, scheduled for January 19-21, 1990, will feature both indoor and outdoor exhibits of equipment and supplies for sports field maintenance, as well as a comprehensive educational program.

More than 200 sports turf managers and 40 exhibitors attended the First Annual STMA Convention this past January at Dodgertown in Vero Beach, FL.

"STMA's annual conference offers an excellent educational opportunity not only to STMA members, but to all turfgrass managers," states President Steve Cockerham. "You don't have to be a member to attend the annual meeting. Best of all, Houston provides a central location within the United States."

The association has reserved a block of more than 200 rooms at the Wyndham Greenspoint Hotel at reduced convention rates. STMA is currently arranging special air fares for sports turf managers traveling from other states.

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN NAMED

STMA President Stephen T. Cockerham has named 15 committee chairmen for 1989. "Committee goals," said Cockerham, "are to maximize the value of STMA to the members and to the industry, increase member involvement in the association, and increase membership. I encourage STMA members to take an active role in the association by serving on one of the committees by contacting headquarters in Upland, CA."

The committees and their chairmen are as follows:

Membership - Co-chairmen Mike Schiller, park superintendent, Glenview Park District, Glenview, IL, and Harry Gill, superintendent of grounds, Milwaukee Brewers, Milwaukee, WI.

Public Relations - Chairman John Culbertson, director of public relations, Pacific Sod, Camarillo, CA.

Research - Chairman Dr. James Watson, vice president/chief agronomist, The Toro Company, Minneapolis, MN.

Scholarship - Three co-chairmen, James Long, superintendent of grounds, Holy Cross College, Worcester, MA; Dr. Richard Skogley, professor of agronomy, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI; and Dr. John Hall, extension agronomist, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Blacksburg, VA.

Annual Meeting and Conference - Chairman David Frey, director of property, Cleveland Stadium, Cleveland, OH.

Southeast Sports Turf Institute - Chairman Dr. Gil Landry, extension turf specialist, University of Georgia, Athens, GA.

Northeast Sports Turf Institute - Chairman James Long.
North Central Sports Turf Institute - Co-chairmen George Rokosh, building and grounds manager, College of Du Page, Glen Ellyn, IL, and Charles Gura, supervisor of roads and grounds, Harper College, Palatine, IL.

Western Sports Turf Institute - Chairman Mark Hodnick, supervisor of landscape services, Cal-Poly, Pomona, CA.

In addition to the committee chairmen, Cockerham made two other appointments. Dr. Kent Kurtz, who recently retired as STMA executive, was named education coordinator. Bruce Shank, associate publisher of *sportsTURF* magazine, was appointed association historian.

SIXTH ANNUAL INSTITUTE HELD AT CAL POLY

The oldest of STMA's four regional sports turf institutes, the one held at California State Polytechnic University in Pomona, continued a strong tradition of participation in March. For the sixth straight year, more than 300 sports turf managers and suppliers attended the event to exchange the latest information on management of high-use, recreational turf.

The combination of seminars, exhibits and demonstrations attracted people from three states. Schools, parks, colleges, professional teams, and golf courses were represented among the participants at the one-day meeting on the campus of Cal Poly.

The morning seminars focused on new turf varieties, irrigation and turf renovation. Field demonstrations followed the educational sessions and included infield preparation, field decoration, aerification, drainage installation and mowing. Thirty-three companies exhibited products developed specifically for the sports turf market.

The Cal Poly Institute, cosponsored by the university and STMA, is the model used for institutes held each year in the Chicago area, the Boston area, and Florida. "The growing attendance at STMA Institutes is an indication of the increasing professionalism of sports turf managers throughout the United States," remarked President Steve Cockerham. He also pointed out that the annual convention to be held in 1990 in Houston will provide a similar opportunity for sports turf managers in the central United States.

CATCH THE ACTION

Mark your calendar.

June 21 - Midwest Sports Turf Institute
Harper College, Palatine, IL.

September (TBA) - Northeast Sports Turf Institute.
College of Holy Cross, Worcester, MA.



400 N. Mountain Ave., Suite 301, Upland, CA 91786
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LYON IS FIRST GCSAA PRESIDENT FROM MUNICIPALITY

Until Dennis D. Lyon became the president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) in February, the 62-year-old association had never elected a superintendent from a municipal golf operation as president. Lyon, golf division superintendent for Aurora, CO, Parks Department, is the first.

Lyon's career in municipal golf course management began 16 years ago, when he was hired by Aurora as superintendent of Aurora Hills Golf Club. For the past 15 years, he has been golf division superintendent for all four of Aurora's golf courses. His responsibilities have expanded during that period to include various other duties related to the city's parks and recreation programs.

In addition to a degree in horticulture from Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Lyon has a master's degree in management from the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley. He lent his expertise in management to the GCSAA as chairman of the Finance Committee, secretary treasurer, and vice president prior to being elected president.

Lyon succeeds John Segui, superintendent of Waynesborough Country Club in Berwyn, PA, as president. Gerald Faubel,

superintendent of Saginaw Country Club in Saginaw, MI, was elected vice president. Stephen Cadenelli, superintendent of Metedeconk National Golf Club in Jackson, NJ, was appointed secretary-treasurer.

The GCSAA Board for 1989 includes: Segui, Cadenelli, Randy Nichols of Cherokee Town & Country Club in Dunwoody, GA; Gary Griggs of Shadow Glen Golf Club in Olathe, KS; Randy Zidik of Rolling Hills Country Club in McMurray, PA; William Roberts of Lochmoor Club in Grosse Pointe, MI; and Joseph Baidy of Acacia Country Club in Lyndhurst, OH.

HURDZAN FORMS DESIGN GROUP

Golf course architect Dr. Michael Hurdzan has announced the formation of Hurdzan Design Group, Columbus, OH, which will provide golf course architecture, construction management and related services nationally and internationally.

The design group, which will operate as a division of Can-Am Golf Enterprises, Inc., is the successor to the golf course design firm of Kidwell & Hurdzan, Inc., formed by Hurdzan and his partner and mentor, Jack Kidwell.

Kidwell continues to be active in Hurdzan Design Group as senior design consultant.

Hurdzan is president and chief operating officer, and also serves as executive vice president of Can-Am.

He is one of the three principals who created Can-Am in 1986, with the strategy of providing comprehensive golf course development and management services, and the ability to take any public or private golf course project from conception through operation.

The other principals in Can-Am are Michael C. Rippey, president of Can-Am in the United States, and Robert W. Labbett, president in Canada. Their headquarters are in Michigan City, IN and Waterloo, Ontario.

"With the development of our design team over the past two years, and the addition of some outstanding new personnel, I feel that we can match any golf course design group in the world when it comes to experience and talent," Hurdzan said.

Several new courses designed by Hurdzan and his group, and in some cases coordinated throughout design and construction by Can-Am Golf, will be opening in 1989.

Among these will be a new 27-hole municipal course built on a restored landfill site in Hampton, VA; Crystal Highlands, near St. Louis, MO; Willowbend on Cape Cod, MA; Renaissance Park Golf Course in Charlotte, NC; and Hillcrest Country Club in Batesville, IN.

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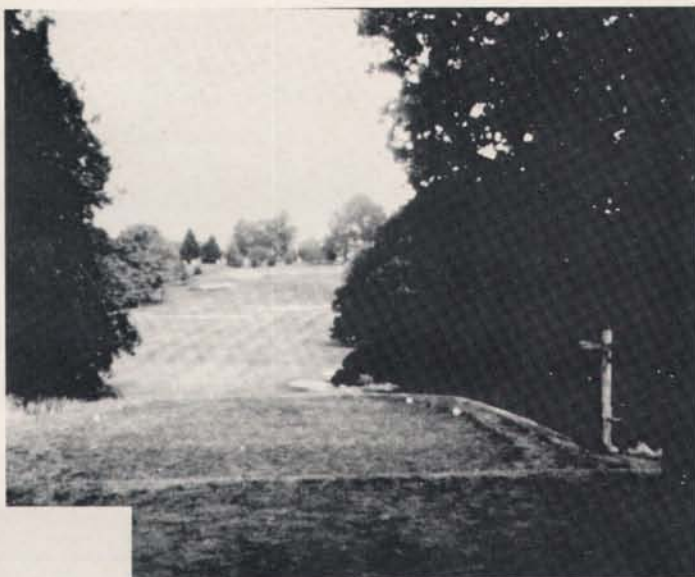
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ESSEX COUNTY COUNTRY CLUB

102-YEAR TRADITION OF

The 18th hole is characteristic of the back nine, with the tee in a chute and a tight fairway bordered with trees (right).

To make the front nine more challenging trees were planted in the roughs and the size of fairways was reduced with contour mowing (below).



For 102 years, Essex County Country Club in West Orange, NJ, has successfully guarded its exclusive status as one of the oldest continuously operating golf courses in the United States. Starting with five holes in 1887, when its wealthy members would ride to the course in horse-drawn buggies, the private course has endured over a century of change—never failing to provide the necessary facilities for a challenging round of golf.

Throughout its history, Essex County Country Club has kept pace with the rising

standards of golf course design and maintenance. John Schoellner, general manager and golf course superintendent, likes to think that the spirit of the club's original members, including inventor Thomas Alva Edison and President William Howard Taft, has been preserved by three successive generations.

"Our members have long expected the finest quality surroundings for their money," declares Schoellner. It's his job to do that despite rising real estate taxes, increasingly stringent pesticide regulations, changing

insurance requirements, and record drought.

"It's almost a job in itself just trying to stay on top of changes in regulations, new golf course maintenance techniques, and new products entering the market," he sighs. And this comes from an educated, experienced superintendent who was literally born on a golf course.

Schoellner has stayed on top of these changes since 1969 by keeping active in the New Jersey Golf Course Superintendents Association, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, and most recently the Club Managers Association. He is both a certified golf course superintendent (CGCS) and certified club manager (CCM). The country club also subscribes to the United States Golf Association Green Section service.

"A superintendent needs all the information he can get his hands on," advises Schoellner. "You've got to participate in organizations and activities in order to meet the people who are willing to share their expertise. Education is a lifelong process."

Schoellner also credits a management style he has developed over 25 years for helping him apply a constant flow of new information to his job. "Once you develop

GUARDS QUALITY



John Schoellner CGCS.

an effective management style, you can apply it to anything. You've got to set priorities, learn the latest and most effective solutions to problems, hire qualified people, and pay them well. Then you must learn to delegate and follow up so that your staff does things the way you want them done. You can't be afraid to make decisions. In time, you find a style that works for you."

Schoellner's turf education started at the age of nine when he began working on the nine-hole golf course surrounding his home in Monmouth County, NJ. After graduating from high school, he helped his father develop a course for the Monmouth County Park System. This gave him broader insight into golf course operation and convinced him to attend college. He started at Rutgers and then switched over to Pennsylvania State University's two-year turf program.

His first job out of school was as an intern to Superintendent James O'Gibney at Deal Golf and Country Club in Wayside, NJ. "Jim

is an Irishman who taught me the art of being frugal," recalls Schoellner. "He knew how to get the most out of a dollar." Managing money must have appealed to Schoellner, because he has been balancing budgets ever since.

When he became superintendent of Essex County Country Club in 1977, his frugality came to play right away. The New York metropolitan area was sprawling westward as people who worked in Manhattan had to travel further to find affordable homes. One-way commutes of more than an hour were becoming common, and the population of areas like Essex County was booming.

Essex County Country Club had earlier added a second 18-hole daily fee course on part of its original land. For a number of years, the club operated two courses, one private 18-hole course and the daily fee course. That was the situation when Schoellner arrived.

The taxes for the courses were a growing burden to the club, amounting to one-third of its annual budget. But the members did not want a housing development to ruin the serenity of the rolling property.

For three years Schoellner managed both courses, until an arrangement was made to have the county buy the daily fee course and turn it into a municipal course. The demand on golf courses in the region was tremendous. There just weren't enough public courses to meet the demand, so the county was able to buy the one course from the country club.

Now the maintenance budget, which had been spread thin to cover both courses, could be fully utilized to maintain the high-quality private course that the members desired. The turf was predominantly *Poa annua*. Much of the original bentgrass had succumbed to diseases encouraged by compaction, overwatering, and too much available nitrogen. A three-inch-deep thatch layer had developed in the fairways.

Schoellner contacted Dr. Henry Indyk at Rutgers for his advice. He also spoke to Stan Zontek and Jim Snow of the USGA Green Section and fellow superintendents with annual bluegrass problems to find out what they were doing. Then he asked his suppliers for their recommendations.

Restoring the course to bentgrass boiled down to a comprehensive disease control program, Schoellner realized. "Comprehensive" meant much more than identifying diseases and selecting the right fungicides. He wanted to correct the problem from all angles, including irrigation, thatch, soil,

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Berm surrounding large green hides deep bunkers on opposite side.



Essex County Country Club

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annual bluegrass control, and fungicides. Yet he was determined to accomplish all this at a reasonable cost to the club.

He first attacked the problem from the standpoint of thatch. He initiated a program of heavy fairway aeration in the fall, holding off on water, then seeding with a mixture of bentgrass and perennial ryegrass. The following spring he continued to use less water than before on the fairways. "It's not necessarily the amount of water that's important, but the frequency of each cycle," he says. "I use a wetting agent because it decreases the amount of water necessary, creates better color in the turf, and the ground remains softer."

Schoellner knew the course needed to overhaul its 15-year-old double-row irrigation system, but first there was another part of his plan that he wanted to implement. He wanted to reduce the acreage in fairways from 45 acres to 22 acres. It sounded radical, so he approached the membership cautiously, explaining that he could widen the landing areas and still reduce the size of the fairways considerably.

His goal was to increase maintenance on a smaller area, spending his budget where it would produce the greatest results. Not only would this control his chemical cost, it would allow him to contour the fairways with lightweight mowers and remove the clippings. The lighter mowers would create less compaction and remove a portion of annual bluegrass seedheads. By continuing to reseed these areas with bentgrass, the bent would replace the Poa.

He knew that annual bluegrass was susceptible to the same diseases as bentgrass, but it had the advantage of reseeding itself naturally. For the bent to overtake the annual bluegrass, he had to control diseases and reseed with creeping bentgrasses.

The Kentucky bluegrass/fine fescue roughs with their lower maintenance requirement would be enlarged. The rough could be cut more efficiently and required less fertilizer and water.

The fairways on the front nine were larger than intended anyway, because a steady loss of trees and ornamental shrubs had increased the turf area. "We were losing 50 trees a year without replacing them," Schoellner remarked. "The front nine had changed as a result." He added a tree replacement program to his future project list.

For the greens, Schoellner added monthly topdressing to aeration and reseeding. The old natural soil greens are topdressed with screened soil to eliminate the thatch layer. Except for annual bluegrass, the greens and tees were holding up well to the 21,000 rounds the course carries in an average year.

To eliminate flush growth which is especially prone to diseases, Schoellner converted his fertilization program for fairways, tees, and greens to 20-0-16 with IBDU slow-

release nitrogen. The high level of potassium also contributed to the drought and heat tolerance of the turf and reduced the severity of diseases. Phosphorus would be applied when deficiencies were revealed by soil tests.

Now Schoellner was ready to implement a preventive disease control program. He had identified the most damaging and costly disease on greens, tees and fairways to be *Pythium* blight. "*Pythium* spreads practically overnight," he warns. "Once it gets a foothold, you're left with bare spots."

A couple of years ago, Schoellner had a run-in with the disease. He noticed a very small patch of *Pythium* late one afternoon, but decided to wait until morning to treat it. "That night we had extremely high temperatures and humidity. The next day it had spread all over the area and completely destroyed a section of fairway," he recalls. "Today, I don't take chances with *Pythium* blight."

When temperatures and humidity begin to rise in the spring, he spikes problem greens, then applies Aliette (Chipco). Schoellner was one of the first superintendents in his area to try this preventative method of *Pythium* control. One fungicide treatment protects his greens from the fast-spreading disease for up to three weeks.

Steep banks make this bunker a tough chip to the green.



He utilizes disease detection kits from Agri-Diagnostics to keep a watch on *Pythium* levels on fairways and tees. "We saved probably \$10,000 last year by testing for disease levels before treating," Schoellner reveals. "We don't take chances on greens, but we can be more selective about other parts of the course. We can test disease levels in minutes without having to send samples to a lab for analysis."

There are no detection kits available for *Helminthosporium* leaf spot, so Schoellner begins treatment for this disease with the onset of warm weather. "This helps to strengthen my tees, greens, and fairways for the stresses of summer," he reports. "I think it also helped get us through the past two droughts with minimal loss of turf."

Two applications of about 1.5 to 2.0 ounces per 1,000 square feet of iprodione (Chipco 26019) are made in May, followed

two weeks later with a third application. "The residual control also gives me a head start with my dollar spot and brown patch problems later on," he adds. "We have nearly eliminated our dollar spot problems."

Schoellner treats greens and fairways for brown patch from June through August. He switched to iprodione last July when the fungicide he had previously used for brown patch stopped working. The wettable powder started clearing up the disease within a week and provided control through most of August. Then a second treatment was made.

"I make it a point not to use the same product over and over," Schoellner explains. "This helps eliminate any resistance problems." When necessary, he rotates iprodione with other fungicides, such as triadimefon (Bayleton), chlorothalonil (Daconil 2787), propiconazole (Banner), and fenarimol (Rubigan). He also uses disease detection kits for brown patch and dollar spot to avoid making any unnecessary treatments.

"In October we concentrate fungicide application on fairways, because I've found snow mold occurs more often on the ryegrass," explains Schoellner. He has also discovered that an October application of iprodione to greens, tees, and fairways will

carry over to control pink snow mold. "It really helps to have a fungicide that's versatile enough to handle seasonal turf diseases."

He extends this versatility to control of diseases of surrounding trees, shrubs and ornamentals. The club has a horticultural specialist who comes in and evaluates the grounds for disease, insect, and other problems. "In some cases I can keep labor and application costs down by applying the same product (26019) on my turf as I do on the trees and shrubs," Schoellner remarks.

He has also found that versatility can extend to control of annual bluegrass. By applying fenarimol to problem greens, he has been able to reduce the population of Poa. Recently he has begun to apply Cutless plant growth regulator to control annual bluegrass on the fairways and Scotts TGR for tees.

The club is very protective of its trees and shrubs. Eight years ago, it hired Dr. Ray Korbobo from Rutgers to design a plant replacement program for the course. More than \$50,000 was spent during a three-year period to replace hundreds of trees lost over the years on the front nine, and to add dogwoods, hawthornes, rhododendrons, azaleas and witch hazel on the rolling back nine. "We are guarding our investment by paying as much attention to the trees and shrubs as we do the turf," Schoellner points out.

As the new trees were planted, the gypsy moth was severely defoliating some of the majestic older trees as well as some of the new ones. "I knew that if we treated just the trees on the course, reinfestation would occur quickly," Schoellner recalls. So he went door to door to each home within a block surrounding the course offering to spray their trees at no charge.

For four years in a row, Schoellner was able to get the support of the residents, partly because he used Sevin insecticide, which had an excellent safety record. "We have not had a problem for the past three years with gypsy moth and no longer have to spray," he reflects. "I think the neighbors and members appreciated our concern for their welfare."

Today this relationship is more important than ever, due to the implementation of a state right-to-know law. "We are required to post signs at the first and the tenth tees explaining where we treated, the proposed date of the next application, the pest involved, and insurance information," Schoellner reveals. "The interesting thing about notification is that the signs have to stay up until the next treatment. That can be for weeks."

A bigger concern of Schoellner's are the new storage regulations. The rules now require storage facilities to include double-locked doors, a concrete barrier in case of spills, and a certain amount of ventilation. "This is going to make dealer service more important than price," he explains. "To eliminate storage, many superintendents are going to buy just what they need to apply at the time. Rather than buy in quantity to save money, they will buy just what they need, and expect the dealer to store the chemicals for them."

By working closely with the club's insurance carrier, which inspects the course at least three times a year, Schoellner has been able to lower his insurance costs by 15 percent this year. "A club manager has to control costs," he states. "Being a superintendent has taught me when and where I can cut without hurting the quality of the course. I learned a long time ago that if you take care of the course, the rest will follow."

So when the course ran out of water for irrigation twice last summer, Schoellner realized he could wait no longer to do something about the irrigation system. "It was the first time in ten years that the holding ponds fell below the intakes. We were

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Essex County Country Club

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using water faster than the well pumps could resupply it."

The country club shares the well with the county course. Schoellner had observed the installation of a Buckner COPS computer controlled system the year before on the county course. He could see the difference immediately between the COPS system and his 20-year-old double row system.

The irrigation system stretches 1¼ miles from end to end. Eleven holes are on a loop, with seven holes on a separate arm. "The pressure was so poor that we could operate only one station on three of the seven holes at a time," Schoellner reveals. "We had to start irrigating at 8 p.m. and didn't finish until 7 the following morning. Since lightning had damaged nearly a third of our system, we were still using quick couplers for part of the course. This was compounding our disease problems."

The frugal Schoellner figured out a way to install the new system without using outside contractors. He started by renovating the pump station, adding a jockey pump and installing a pump controller. He kept the cast iron mains, but replaced all the galvanized laterals with PVC pipe.

All valves and heads in the double-row system were replaced with Buckner components. The COPS computer enables Schoellner to balance the irrigation schedule to preserve design pressures for the heads. "Our coverage has improved tremendously and we have been able to shorten our watering time," he states.

Schoellner foresees another drought this year. "We didn't have a decent snow all winter. The brooks are not flowing, and the ground is not as wet as it would normally be in the spring. It's going to be another tough year."

But Essex County Country Club has withstood droughts many times over its 102-year history. He is prepared this year, however, and he knows from previous dry years that he can withhold water from the now-healthy bentgrass for two days if he has to without losing turf. "We could not have done that before," he adds.

Schoellner has delegated much of the day-to-day course maintenance to Mike Sheridan, his assistant superintendent. The graduate of the University of Massachusetts turf program at Stockbridge worked at a neighboring course for 12 years and knows the problems faced in the area. Besides, Schoellner is busy trying to solve a labor shortage problem as well as the environmental and insurance issues.

"This club is more than one of the oldest private courses in the country," remarks Schoellner. "It is a good test of golf." This is the home course for the New Jersey PGA match play championship. "The back nine is one of the finest in golf, with narrow tree-lined fairways, chute tees and deep bunkers. Our members bring guests every day the course is so highly regarded. I've got to keep it that way for the next generation." ●

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TORONTO SKYDOME TO OPEN MID-SEASON

Construction crews are working feverishly on Toronto's \$300 million Skydome in hopes of being ready for the Blue Jays' night game against the Milwaukee Brewers on June 5. If they make it, the retractable cap of the stadium will probably be open for the team to play under the stars, as they will at Exhibition Stadium for the first three months of the season.

The Blue Jays and the Brewers will be playing on AstroTurf in the dome stadium that nearly became the first to install natural turf indoors. After a two-week homestand, the field will be covered with more than 400 truckloads of dirt for the two-day Molson Export Supercross. The Toronto Argonauts Canadian Football team then opens its season on June 29 against Winnipeg in the dome.

The Skydome features 160 skyboxes and a large section of club seating. It has 47 built-in camera positions and a 20,000-square-foot television production facility. In case of rain or snow, three roof sections totaling an area of eight acres can be closed in minutes.

Later in the year, Stadium Corporation of Ontario Ltd. will open the first phase of the Skydome Hotel, a health club, a 500-seat McDonald's restaurant, and a retail shopping area.

GCSAA CERTIFIES 1,000TH MEMBER

Ronald M. Ross, superintendent of Hillcrest Country Club, Lincoln, NE, has become the 1,000th active golf course superintendent to earn the Certified Golf Course Superintendent (CGCS) designation from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA).

Ross has been superintendent of the 18-hole private club since 1984. Previously, he worked at the Great Oaks Country Club, Rochester, MI, and the Grand Hotel Golf Club, Mackinac Island, MI.

GCSAA instituted the certification program in 1971 as a means of recognizing outstanding and progressive golf course superintendents.

To become certified, a candidate must have five years' experience as a golf course superintendent and be currently employed in that capacity. The candidate must pass a rigorous six-hour examination testing knowledge of the game and rules of golf, turfgrass management, pest-control management, financial management, organizational management, and the history, ethics, purpose, and procedures of GCSAA.

In addition, an on-site inspection of Ross' golf course operation was conducted by two currently certified superintendents, Alan G. Culver of Lincoln and Tom Athy of Fremont.

MARY ELIZABETH LAFETRA



Mary Elizabeth LaFetra, the former president and chairman of the board of Rain Bird Sprinkler Manufacturing Corp., Glendora, CA, died in March at the age of 79. She and her husband, Clem LaFetra, founded the company in 1935 and alternated corporate titles until his death in 1963.

The couple built the company into the largest irrigation manufacturer in the world, starting with a horizontal, arm-driven impact sprinkler for both landscape and agricultural use. Mary LaFetra guided the company through one of its greatest expansionary periods following her husband's death. Their son, Anthony, has continued this growth since becoming president in 1977.



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Planning Makes Diamond Sparkle at Park District



Grosche Field is maintained continuously into November.

Thousands of acres of high-use park turf were at risk last summer when record high temperatures broiled the Chicago area for weeks. By the end of June, many park superintendents watched helplessly as their baseball diamonds and soccer fields turned from green to brown.

The problem grew worse as communities implemented water restrictions. Park superintendents became more concerned about golf and athletic field turf than they had in years.

In response to this heightened concern and a general increase in athletic field management, the Midwest Institute of Park Executives (MIPE) scheduled a special one-day athletic field seminar. Never before had MIPE presented such a program.

Greg Petry, superintendent of parks for Waukegan, IL, and Mike Schiller, park superintendent for Glenview, IL, volunteered to put together the important meeting. They wanted to make the event practical and informative. While they had the attention of the park executives, they hoped to demonstrate how they could provide high-quality fields with planning, organization and control.

Petry and Schiller invited Harry Gill, superintendent of grounds for the Milwaukee Brewers, and Ken Mrock, superintendent of grounds for the Chicago Bears, to explain how they were handling field renovation, game preparation, and especially the heat and drought. Area distributors were invited to speak on equipment, fertilization and seed selection.

Petry felt he had something to share as well. For years he had devoted a large

amount of time to refining a field renovation and maintenance program. He read magazines, attended training seminars, and sought the advice of his suppliers. By taking this information and applying his park management skills learned at Pennsylvania State University in University Park, he built a solid program for three different park districts. The result of the efforts by Petry and his staff was now available for all to see at Al Grosche Field in Waukegan. So that was where the meeting was held last August.

A large tent was pitched in the outfield. When Gill arrived and started walking the field with Petry and Parks Supervisor Mike Twigg, he had nothing but praise. "If Grosche Field had 7,000 seats around it, any double A club would be happy to play here," he exclaimed. "That's saying something when you consider Greg is working with a park budget!"

Petry knew Grosche Field was special. But after hearing Gill's remarks, he thought it might be the best park field in the country. So he decided to enter it in the Beam Clay Baseball Diamond of the Year Award contest. The judges for the contest confirmed Petry's suspicion this winter, naming it the winning diamond in the park and school category. And the judges didn't even take into account the drought last summer.

During the MIPE meeting, Petry told his fellow park executives, "You should devote the energy necessary to learn the latest maintenance practices for athletic fields. But unless you build them into a definite plan and apply business techniques and politics to get the needed materials and supplies, all your hard work can be wasted.

You can't renovate a field and then let it deteriorate. You have to maintain a standard of care that gives the community something to be proud of for years.

"Once you create a quality facility and recognize its importance, it's not that difficult to create a maintenance schedule for your staff to follow. But it may take you years to learn what works best," he warned. "It's your job to create the schedule, obtain all the supplies, and make sure the schedule is followed without fail."

Petry not only oversees maintenance scheduling for Waukegan's 27 ballfields, five soccer fields, and one football stadium, he also works closely with the district's athletic supervisor, Dave Kilbane, who schedules their use. All baseball leagues that want to play on Grosche Field must submit their requests in March. After all requests are in, he puts together a master schedule for the year. Petry and Kilbane meet weekly to review the schedule and to make necessary changes.

Before the first game is played on Grosche Field, Petry and his staff put together the maintenance schedule for the year by fitting maintenance into the master schedule. Trigg, the park supervisor, takes the maintenance schedule and assigns daily work orders to one full-time maintenance worker and the leaders of three seasonal crews who perform the work. Each year, the week before July 4 is blocked out to rest the field and to give the park crew time to do detail work.

Grosche Field is the park district's premiere field. It is named after Al Grosche, the retired baseball coach at Waukegan Township High School who for 35 years groomed teenagers into serious contenders for the major leagues. He didn't stop when school let out in June. He urged them to continue to play during the summer with the American Legion or Colt leagues. He also formed a traveling team made up of his best players.

Since Grosche's retirement, Waukegan baseball leaders have preserved his traveling team. Lately, 90 percent of the youths on the team have received baseball scholarships to colleges, and five were drafted by the major leagues. Those who choose a career other than baseball after graduating from high school can continue to play in the Shoreline League during the summer at Grosche Field.

Between May and September, 101 games are played on the field. A third of these are tournament games where the stakes are high for young athletes. High school, American Legion, and Colt district tournaments are regularly held at Grosche